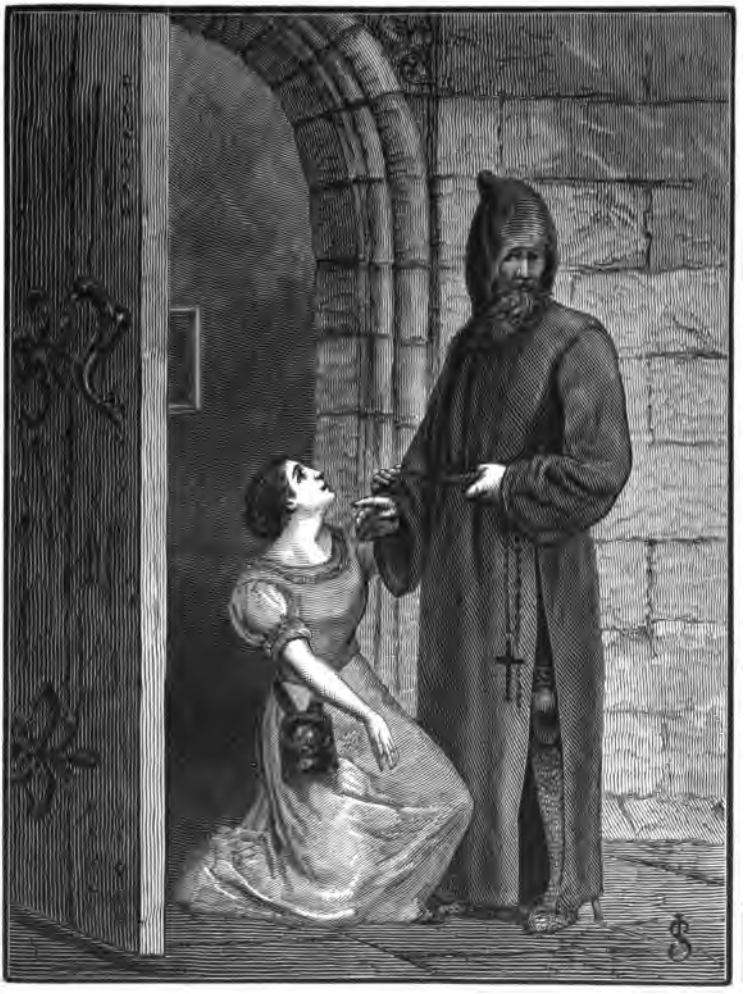
Belle A Brown.

Chicago.

Ill.



"TURN ROUND THY FACE, AND SEE WHAT THOU HAST DONE!"

"THE PALMER."

LOVE AND

AND

DAVID

[illegible]

HAST DONE!"

LOVE AMONG THE GAMINS,

AND OTHER POEMS.

BY

DAVID L. PROUDFIT,

(PELEG ARKWRIGHT).

NEW YORK:

DICK & FITZGERALD, PUBLISHERS.

1877

TO

MY GOOD FRIEND

JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY.

PREFACE.

The verses of this collection have nearly all been published in the New York *Daily Graphic*, under the nom de plume of "Peleg Arkwright," a pseudonym which was accidentally attached to my first publication without my knowledge or consent.

I take this opportunity to discard it forever, and resume my own proper name, which, if not more euphonious, is, at least, honestly and legitimately awkward.

DAVID L. PROUDFIT.

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Love Among the Gamins

AND OTHER POEMS

Love Among the Gamins.

'Tain't but what I gets a livin'—
  Savin' money, sir, I be;
Sellin' pape's is tol'ble easy,
  'T ain't no figgurin' bothers me.
Parents? No sir, not a parent,
  Would n't have 'em if I could;
Other fellers sometimes has 'em,
  But they mostly ain't no good.

Mostly drinks and swears and cusses,
  Lams their young 'uns, nips their stamps;
Youngsters has hard lines a plenty,
  'Thout supportin' growed-up tramps.
I have heerd old gen'l'm'n gassin'
  'Bout the sacred ties of hum;
Never see it op'rate pleasant
  In the sp'ere of life I's from.

Newsboys ain't by no means wantin',
  Any more than gen'l'm'n is,
In the sort o' thing called feelin's—
  They's the same in ev'ry biz.
It's the cheese to say that wimmin
  Plays the dooce with all mankind;
Well, the little gals is sim'lar—
  That's what ails the undersigned!

Mamie is the name they calls her—
  Sells bokays around the street;
But there ain't no bokay nowheres
  On this planet half so sweet.
Pinks and roses suits me bully,
  Wholesome smellin' flowers be;
But the niftiest nosegays weaken
  Lookin' at 'em side o' she.

And to think that such a rooster
  Like that polish-jerkin' Jim
Takes the eye o' little Mamie—
  I could put a roof on him!

[illegible] wanted
[illegible] man is
[illegible] Lib's -
[illegible]
[illegible] wimmin
[illegible] kind;
[illegible] is [illegible]
[illegible] designed!

[illegible] name to [illegible] call's home
[illegible] folks in and the street;
[illegible] are [illegible] novelties
[illegible] sweet.
[illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] lovers [illegible];
[illegible] days we taken
[illegible] side o' she.

[illegible] rooster
[illegible] him
[illegible]
[illegible]!

'TAINT BUT WHAT I GETS A LIVIN' -
SAVIN' MONEY, SIR, I BE.

He's a cheeky chin-musician!
  Such a scalawag be cussed!
I don't ask no great indoosement
  Fur to up and bust his crust!

Calls hisself a 'shine-purveyor'—
  Hefty name fur blackin' boots!—
But instead o' shine-purveyin',
  Hypers round a playin' roots;
Gits small boys to pitchin' pennies—
  Cheats 'em, sir, red-hot and sizzin';
Empties all their little pockets
  Purveyin' pennies into his'n.

I ain't blamin' little Mamie
  (Oh, yer'd orter see them eyes!)
She dunno that Jim's a sucker,
  Swellin', fit to bust, with lies;
And it ain't my place to tell her,
  Tho' somebody'd orter do it;
Tellin' tales ain't my perfession—
  Can't egzackly tumble to it.

Wot's the use o' bein' honest,
  Workin' hard and savin' stamps,
All the luck there is a-goin'
  Seems to b'long to loafin' scamps.
Wot's the use o' tendin' night-school,
  Larnin' fur to write and speak;
Ef you want a payin' lesson,
  Larn to nail the gift o' cheek.

Love in Oyster Bay.

I aint anybody in particular,
  And never cal'lated to be;
I'm aware that my views doesn't signify
  Except to Belinda and me;
But I'm heavy on openin' oysters—
  In regards to them I am free
To remark, that for shellin' of Blue Points,
  There is few that can lay over me.

Excuse my perfessional blowin'—
  It isn't the point I would make;
But I'm feelin' particular airy
  An' uncommonly wide-awake,
An' I've got to be talkin' about it—
  It won't lay quiet y' see—
Which the name of the girl is Belinda
  That's took an affection for me.

It's surprisin'! The fact is surprisin'!
  Just cast your eye over this frame—
Is there anything specially gallus,
  Which characterizes the same?
As a model for makin' wax-figgers
  I shouldn't make much of a stir;
But I aint a goin' to worry,
  So long as I'm pleasin' to her.

An impediment hinders my speakin'
  As I should admire to do;
As an elocution professor
  My scholars would likely be few;
But she said, when I mentioned it to her,
  "Why, dear, don't you fret, for you see,
You tell me you love me, my darling,
  And your voice is like music to me."

I was never indicted for intellect
  Nor never arrested for cheek,
But I'm holdin' my head elevated
  Since Thursday night was a week;

AS I WISH THAT THE [illegible]
I COULD LAY AT HER [illegible] LIFE [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] be few:

[illegible] tioned [illegible]

[illegible] you [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] is [illegible]

"An' I wish that the whole of creation
I could lay at her poor little feet."

Fur that was the date when Belinda
  Allowed she was partial to me,
And give me a relish fur livin'
  An' a notion of workin' fur she.

She isn't egzackly a beauty,
  And also she uses a crutch;
But the eyes of that dear little cripple
  The heart of an oyster would touch;
They is wonderful soft, and so lovin'—
  A good-lookin' face on the whole,
Fur the light in them eyes seems to travel
  Right out from a beautiful soul.

If she had been lively and hearty
  I couldn't have helped her, y' see;
An' similar, then, it ain't likely
  That she would uv took up with me.
An' I wouldn't uv knowed her and loved her,
  So patient and gentle and sweet;
An' I wish that the whole ov creation
  I could lay at her poor little feet.

I was never so chirk an' galloptious,
  An' never before felt so spry,
An' I've just took to noticin', lately,
  How amazin'ly blue is the sky;
An' how gay is the stars in the night-time,
  A winkin' and glimmerin' down—
Good gracious! I come near forgettin'
  That barrel of oysters for Brown.

LOVE IN THE KITCHEN.

"Now, Mr. Malone, whin yer shpakin' like that
It is aisy to see— Arrah, git out o' that!
Whin discoorsin' wid ladies, politeness should tache
That ye're not to use hands, sir, instid ov yer spache.
Should the missus come down, sir, how would I appear
Wid me hair all bewildhered?"

"Oh, Kitty, me dear.
Yer pardon I ax, but yer mouth is so sweet,
It's a betther acquaintance I'm seekin' wid it;
An' I love you so fondly—begorra, it's thrue!
That I'm always unaisy unless I'm wid you,
An' thin I'm unaisy as bad as before,
An' there's nothin 'll aise me at all any more
Until yer betrothal I've got, and, bedad,
I'll not let ye go till yer promise I've had."

"It is just like yer impidince, Mr. Malone!"

"Ye can't call it impidint, Kitty, ohone,
Fur a man to be lovin' the likes of yerself;
An' ye might marry worse, if I say it meself,
Fur me heart is yer own, an' me wages is good,
An' I know of a brick cabin built out of wood,
To be had fur the askin' of Dennis McCue;
Fur he's goin' to lave it, and thin it'll do,
Wid some fixin' an' mendin' to keep out the air,
An' a bit ov a boord to patch up here an' there,
An' a thrifle ov mud to discourage the cracks—
An' we'll make up in lovin' whatever it lacks;
An' it's built on a rock, with a mighty fine view
Ov the counthry surroundin' that same avinew;
An' to be quite ginteel, an ixtinsion we'll rig,
Convaynient for keepin' an illegant pig;
An' thin we'll both prosper as nate as ye plaze,
An' ye'll see me an aldherman some o' those days;
And the childher will grow up with schoolin' an' sich,
An' in politics thin they'll be sure to get rich.
Oh, this is the land fur improvin' the race!
So, Kitty, mavourneen, turn round yer dear face,
An' give us one kiss, the betrothal to own."

"The divil a bit ov it, Teddy Malone!
D'ye think I'd be lavin' a house ov brown stone
Fur the tumble-down shanty yer talkin' about,
While I live like a lady, wid two evenin's out,
An' a wardrobe I flatter meself is complete?
Sure ye couldn't tell missus from me on the sthreet!
An' at home it's the same, fur she's fond of her aise,
An' ye couldn't say which ov us bosses the place;
An' it's like yer asshurance to ask me to lave,
An' be the same token—now, will ye behave?
Let go ov me hand, sir!"

"But, Kitty, me dear,
Ye can't be intindin' to always live here,
Wid niver a husband, but mopin' alone,
An' niver a baby—"

"Whist, Mr. Malone!
Yer very onmannerly."

"Divil a wan!
It's only the truth that I'm tellin', indade,
That yer niver intindin' to die an old maid."

"It's right ye are, Teddy, how could ye know this?"

"Well, thin, will it plaze ye to give me the kiss?"

"Git out wid yer blarney! shure how can I tell
But there might be another would suit me as well?"

"Arrah, Kitty, me darlin', don't say that agin,
If ye wouldn't be killin' the thruest of min;
But if there's another ye like more than me,
Thin it's faithless ye are, an' it's goin' I'll be,
An' I'll die broken-hearted fur lack ov the joy
That I thought to be gainin'—"

"Why, Teddy, me boy,
Is it dyin' yer shpakin' of? What would I do,
An unmarried widda in mournin' for you?
An' ye wanted a kiss? Well, there, if ye must—
Oh, murther, the man is devourin' me, just!
Is it atin' me up ye'd be afther, belike?
Well, it's not so onplaizin', ye may if ye like;
An' if any one's askin' about ye, I'll own
That a broth of a boy is me Teddy Malone."

Love in the Library.

Puss, curled on cushions, so demure and meek,
Contented, feline, satisfied and sleek,
Thou mindest me of one I fain would seek.

Thou art so placid in thy robe of fur,
So sweet the music of thy gentle purr—
Dear puss, I fear thou dost resemble her.

Such dreamy depths are in thy sleepy eyes,
So like the wondrous calm of summer skies,
They, too, remind me of the ones I prize.

Thou art so perfect, supple, and so still,
Lazily beautiful when thou hast the will,
Soft, smooth—yea, sinister! and prone to kill.

For thou hast gifts to make thy lovers quail;
Powers to make a suitor's spirit fail;
Latent capacities of tooth and nail.

Like her? I know not. Puss, resolve to me:
What if a mouse enamored was of thee,
And sought to please thee, loving copiously?

Thou wouldst respond, methinks thy purring saith,
With low, sweet sounds of hot, bewildering breath,
And, at the end—a sharp and cruel death.

I am no mouse, but just as helpless quite;
Pauline, with eyes serene as stars at night,
Doth fill my soul with fearful, strange delight.

Such thrills roll off her wealth of auburn hair,
That one to touch its tangles should beware;
But, O my soul! she is most marvelous fair.

So great the mystery of her glorious eyes,
Such unguessed depths her beauty underlies,
That yet I tremble, fearing some surprise.

In manhood's strength I stand, yet shaken so
With memories of Pauline, that I must know
Unheard of bliss, or unimagined woe.

And can she love? Yea, more than tigers hate!
And will she love? Aye, rarely, soon or late!
And me? I'll go and read that riddle straight.

Love in the Bindery.

Oh, there wasn't any trouble, nor any cause to fret,
Nor there wasn't any quarrels, nor nothin' to regret;
And the girls was gay and friendly, and the boys was
all likewise,
And the bosses they was pleasant, and I reckoned on
a rise;
And my young man he used to be a leavin' his ma-
chine,
For to come and whisper something, which I thought
it all serene;
And the bindery was as jolly as a Coney Island hop
Till that 'ere thing with ringlets come a skippin' to
the shop.

Oh, I never can forget it, what a tremble I was in,
When my young man he told me that he thought it
was a sin

For a little rose-budblossom, which he said that I was one,
To be workin' in a bindery on a seven-shillin' run;
And that, if I would marry, he was gettin' ample pay,
To start a little nest agoin' in a modest way:
And I should be his queen, he said—his happy queen for life—
"No," I says, "John Andrew Johnson, but I'll be your loving wife."

Then the days they slipped and slided, and my troubles was forgot,
And the evenings they was happy—I was suited to a dot;
For John Andrew was attentive, and I gladdened at his sight—
We come down together mornin's, and he saw me home at night.
He took all the weekly papers with continued stories in,

And we read 'em over noon-spells, while a sittin chin
to chin;
All my life was bright and happy, like it never was
before,
Till that pesky thing with ringlets come a sidlin'
through the door.

Well, the pinkin' and the flutin' and the crimpin' she
displayed,
And the artful airs and graces and the eyes that crit-
ter made,
Appeared to be ridiculous to all us other girls,
But the men was always starin' when she shook her
pretty curls;
And the bosses they advanced her to a 'leven-shillin'
place
(It is strange that rules of business should be altered
for a face);
But the saddest day I ever knew was when I come
to see
That my John was bein' dazzled, and a growin' cold
to me.

And it come to pass one noon-spell I was sittin' all
alone,
And I couldn't eat my dinner, for my heart was like
a stone,
That I see him sittin' by her, readin' something like
a streak
That he'd read to me some time before—it made me
sick and weak,
And a tear fell down and spattered; then he chanced
to look across,
And he saw that I was cryin', and he got up lookin'
cross,
And I drops my pail o' dinner and I fell to sobbin' sore,
And I says: "John Andrew Johnson, never speak to
me no more."

Then my life become a burden—it is most too hard
to bear;
And a pain is in my side, and oh, my heart is sick
with care;
And the shop is full of bitterness, and everybody's
tried,

For the men have got so jealous, and the girls dissatisfied;
And the bosses takes her part up if a body makes complaint,
For they seem to think her wriggles are the graces of a saint;
And as long as men are bosses, there is reason to declare
Woman's work will be a problem still of lips and eyes and hair.

Love in Baxter Street.

Pete, you mind that dancin' cripple
  Used to flourish on one fluke?
Scanty Jake, they allers called him—
  Danced at Connorses' Grand Duke.
Never seed him? Never been there?
  You don't say you never been!
Well, I thought that every Arab
  In this town had took that in.

That there pallis of amoosement
  Tops the Bowery every time;
Hev to scoop it in some evenin',
  When we've raked an extra dime.
Five cents each 'll buy the tickets,
  Five fur peanuts—hang expense!
Ef you like we'll go it nobby—
  Take a box fur fifteen cents.

I'm all hunk on savin' nickels,
  But a little taste o' fun
Now and then don't hurt a feller,
  Helps to make the old thing run ;
Makes the days more flush o' sunshine ;
  Makes yer work go off more gay ;
Ef you're goin' to grind an organ,
  Have a monkey—that's my way.

It were larks to see that cripple
  Dance them wooden pirouettes ;
His one leg was worth a dozen
  Of the Bowery ballet pets ;
Called 'em Terpsich'rean revels—
  Nothin' like a fine French name
Fur to carry off a projeck,
  'Thout there's more of name than game.

Speakin' of the Dobson ten'ment
  Made me think o' him just now ;
We resided in that mansion,
  Him and me did—that's the how.

We was kind o' chums together;
  He was older'n me, of course:
But I tell you wot, that feller
  Had a heart like all out-doors.

When old Sal Magundy flummixed
  (Wot her name wos I dunno,
That's wot everybody called her—
  Anyhow, she had to go),
Little Sal were left an orphan,
  'Thout a single friend on earth;
Then that scanty, one-legged Jacob
  Showed what tender hearts is worth.

She was purty as a chromo,
  All the worse fur him, you see;
Gals that's too good-lookin' allus
  Brings some chap to misery;
Gits their little knowledge-boxes
  Full o' queer idees, I speck,
Till they thinks themselves tin angels;—
  Gals ain't got much intelleck.

When they're plain it's better fur 'em,
  Keeps 'em goin' sure and slow;
Fellers don't come buzzin' round 'em,
  Teachin' of 'em airs, you know.
Tips and zifs, and peeps and riffles,
  B'longs, my boy, to dangerous stock;
When I takes a wife, I'll choose one
  Ugly enough to stop a clock.

It's astonishin' wot eejuts
  Purty eyes 'll bring men to;
Sal's was large and queer and shifty,
  Changin' 'round from black to blue.
The old woman didn't teach her
  Nothin' worth the knowin', Pete—
Fact is, 'taint no mission chapel,
  That there house in Baxter Street.

Well, the old gal turned her toes up,
  Leavin' Sallie, as I said,
'Thout a nickel in her pocket,
  Or a place to lay her head;

And she might have starved, or done worse,
  But fur Jake; he tumbled to,
Said he'd be a brother to her!
  Oh, my eye!—a cripple, too!

Then he buckled into workin'
  Late and early, night and day;
Peddlin' pencils in the day-time,
  Dancin' nights amazin' gay;
It was puffickly surprisin'
  How that critter done so much;
Tell yer, some o' you young roosters
  Might be better fur a crutch.

Starved himself to clothe and feed her,
  Hoped she'd marry of him, Pete;
And the poor cuss used to tell me
  How divine she were, and sweet;
But he didn't durst to ask her—
  It's the queerest thing in life,
For to see a fellow scary
  When he's snoopin' fur a wife.

Molls is mostly purty anxious—
  Chaps don't often have to beg;
But the fact is, Jake was cut up
  'Cos he traveled on one leg.
So it run along a good while—
  'Bout six months or so, I b'lieve—
Till he come to me last winter,
  One night—it were Christmas Eve.

Sot down, pale and weak and tremblin',
  With a bundle on his knee;
Let his crutch fall down quite kerless,
  And his eyes was queer to see.
"Ike," he says, "she left this mornin',
  Yes, she's gone—she's went away;
I'm afraid that Flash Bob took her—
  He's been missin', too, to-day.

"Oh, it's hard!" he says, "it's orful!
  Dunno where she's went at all!
It don't signify—that gnostic's
  Took her far beyond my call.

Ef he'd been an honest feller—
  But a blackleg! Ike, you know
What that means for Sallie's future!—
  Shame and grief! Why did she go?"

He'd been fumblin' with his bundle,
  Without knowin' wot he did;
And the things begun to fall out,
  But he spied 'em as they slid;
Picked 'em up with shakin' fingers,
  Laid 'em kerful on a chair;
Purty woman's duds they was, Pete,
  Nice and warm for winter wear.

"Them," he says, "was Sallie's Christmas—
  Oh, why was I ever born!
Ike, it's hard to be a cripple,
  Only fit fur people's scorn!
Ef I'd been a handsome feller,
  Sometime we'd been married yet:
And I loved her, Ike, I loved her,
  Oh, so much! my little pet!

"I'd 'a been so careful of her—
  I'd 'a worked hard fur her sake —"
Then he broke down, and he sot there,
  Sobbin' like his heart would break;
When the door was opened softly—
  Which it had been on a crack–
What d'y' think? That young gal stood there,
  Just behind the poor chap's back;

And her face was like a sunrise
  Shinin' through a misty sky,
Whilst she touched him on the shoulder,
  "Jake," she says, "my boy, don't cry!
Was these pretty things for me, Jake?
  But *your* Christmas, dear," says she,
"Will you take *me* for your Christmas?
  Would you be content with me?"

Then she nestled down and kissed him,
  With her purty cheeks all wet;
And I b'lieve a happier Christmas
  Never struck a cripple yet.

How'd I come to run her down so?
  I was foolin' of yer, Pete;
Fur a better little woman
  Don't reside in Baxter Street.

Love in the Shop.

It's hard! I might have knowed it!
  It seems to be the rule,
Where women hold the ribbons,
  For men to play the fool.
There must have been some contract,
  Delivered, sealed and signed,
To give the power to females
  To crucify mankind.

They're disappointing insects,
  They don't know what they want—
They'll sack an honest feller
  And take up with a runt;
But though a man may know it
  To be a crazy start,
He always goes for chances
  To lose his head and heart.

And what's the worst of all is,
  The most deceiving kind
Are best rigged out by nature
  To craze a feller's mind;
The sort with milk-punch voices,
  Bewildering hair and eyes,
With frills and airs and graces,
  And softly-spoken lies.

Because I'm but a plasterer,
  And my hands, perhaps, are queer;
And if, in choosing neck-ties,
  My taste is not severe;
And if I ain't as stylish
  As an elegant French Turk,
And don't pretend to quality,
  And ain't above my work;

And if my hair is auburn
  Of a slightly sorrel tint;
And if one eye is dubious,
  With a tendency to squint;

Is it anything against me
  From a moral point of view?
Does it argue that I wouldn't
  Make a husband fond and true?

And I loved her so, my beauty!
  Oh, my darling! my delight!
She was sweeter than a rose-bud,
  She was frescoed pink and white,
And she said she loved me dearly;
  But she shook me, all the same,
For a chap whose hair was parted
  In the middle. Oh, the shame!

So I'm like a graven image,
  Sand-papered by despair;
I stump around blaspheming,
  With plaster in my hair;
And my heart is like a bone-yard
  With remains a lying round;
And I wish that some kind person
  Would just put me underground.

Daddy Flick's Spree.

Daddy Flick was a queer old Dick,
Trudging along with a crooked stick;
Frowsy and dirty, and tattered and torn,
Wearing a hat that a goat would scorn
To nibble at, it was so forlorn.
He was gray as a badger and old as a crow,
And his eyes were queer—well, beery, you know,
Bleached and weak—and he had, I suppose,
The most absurd and peculiar nose
That ever invited a passer-by
To think of the worth of ebriety.
Naught can I say in his praise, I wot.
Respectable? Honest? Oh, certainly not
Most people called him a wretched old sot.
Only a beggar. He used to stand
Day by day, with his hat in his hand,

Asking for pence from the grave and the gay,
And getting them, too, I am glad to say,
Not in abundance, but just enough
For a little bread, and more of the stuff
That went to nourish his curious nose
And keep it blooming, a full-blown rose.
"Life," he said, "for the rich or poor,
Means but the same—endure, endure!
Troubles to poor and rich befall,
But the bottle," he said, "is a friend to all."

Now that you know the old reprobate,
Beggar, dishonest, inebriate,
All that he asks, sir, of you or me
Is a little measure of charity.

For twenty years he had been the same,
Till at last the usual period came
When age began to assert itself
And threatened to lay him upon the shelf,
And parties said in that part of the town
That the poor old sinner was breaking down;

When all at once he was seen to be
Displaying a greater activity—
Begging with more than his usual vim,
And, what was entirely new for him,
Picking up jobs, and inquiring, too,
For any work he could find to do.
Neighbors said it was strange, if true,
When they heard a rumor to that effect—
A change impossible to expect.
It seemed, you perceive, anomalous
That Flick should be turning industrious.
But so it was; if you'll listen well,
The bottom facts of the case I'll tell.

All of us, in this vale of tears,
Rush along through the busy years
Chasing phantoms, and, when they're caught,
Finding out we have captured naught.
I have caught shadows—confound the same!
Happy the mortal who has no aim.

Flick, for seventy years to date,
Had never thought to be bothering fate;

Had been contented to barely live,
Caring for nothing the world can give—
A sort of philosopher, as I think,
In seeking for naught but his meat and drink;
But, mind you, never a notion had he
Of any taint of philosophy.

The greatest and wisest have one soft streak,
And so at the last Flick showed up weak.

He said to himself on a certain day,
"Daddy Flick, you are old and gray,
Likely to drop off any day.
Before your coffin is lowered down,
Or, what is worse, you go on the town,
You ought to have, as it seems to me,
One good, old-fashioned, expensive spree."

Alas, I fear that my readers all
Are disappointed at such a fall;
I wish he had felt a higher call,
Something of nobler and healthier tone,
An aspiration of more backbone.

But I told you before that the poor old rat
Had never a virtue beneath his hat.
I must tell my stories as they befall ;
If you don't like 'em, don't read 'em, that's all.

After a couple of months had passed,
Daddy Flick had at length amassed
A sum sufficient, he thought, to see
His way to that same old-fashioned spree.
And so one night as he paddled home,
He said to himself that the time had come,
And, cackling over an ancient song,
He jingled his cash as he went along.

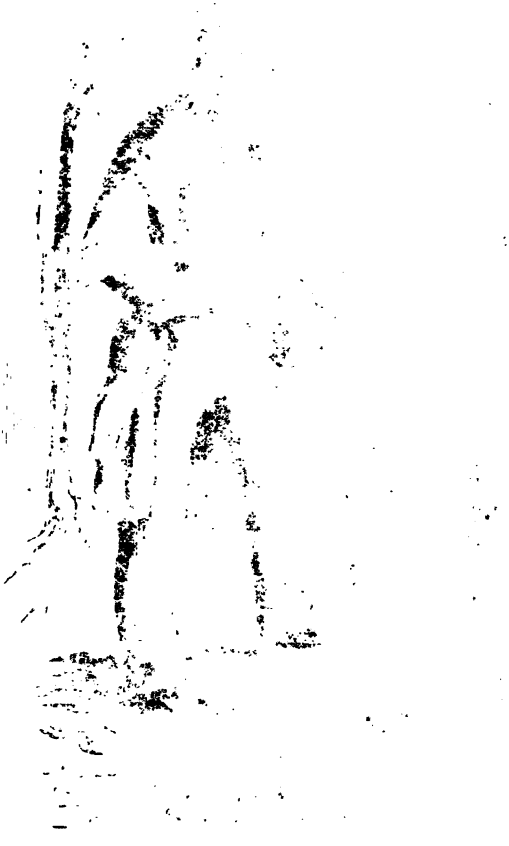
What were his assets? A marvelous sum;
Enough to purchase unlimited rum
(Listen, you who collect your rents!)—
About a dollar and fifty cents.

Passing along by a vacant lot
(The name of the street I have clean forgot),
A very diminutive boy he spied,
Slouching a very tall fence beside:

A lonesome figure, so woe-begone,
So desolate-looking and haggard and wan,
That even Flick, in his callous heart,
Felt a movement of pity start.
Ragged he was and exceedingly small,
With garments that covered him, that was all;
A cap remarkable after its kind,
With front dismantled and baggy behind;
Shoes too big by about a mile,
But gaping wide with a frightful smile,
As though they laughed at the tiny feet
That dragged such a burden along the street.

He stood there listless and weary and worn,
Hands in his pockets, alone and forlorn;
His features stained with the dirty streaks
Of the tears that had dried on his little cheeks.

Flick was none of your tender sort—
Philanthropy never had been his forte;
But the look of the child was so woefully sad
That he stopped and spoke to the little lad,



HIS M...

HE W...

was all ;

His mother had died in a drunken fit,
He was hungry, and that was the whole of it.

And got the story I'll tell to you,
Since it only requires a line or two:
His mother had died in a drunken fit,
He was hungry, and that was the whole of it.

Flick, as you know, was all primed for a spree;
All the same he said, "Come with me!"
And took the child to his narrow den,
And fed him and kept him that night, and then,
To cut it short, he put up the tin
He had labored so long and so hard to win,
And started the boy in the paper trade,
Where he prospered well and a living made.

Then Flick returned to his ancient ways,
And loafed and begged through the listless days;
Cracking, by way of amusing folk,
An occasional rummy and senile joke;
But what is the funniest thing to me,
He always thought he had had that spree,
And bragged about it to every one,
That for once in his life he had had some fun.

He died in the course of time, and went,
I make no doubt, to his punishment;
For, of course, such a wretched old sinner as he
Could stand no show in eternity.
There's just one thing to his credit, though—
He never asked to be born, you know.

FATHER JOHN.

He warn't no long-faced man o' prayer,
A peddlin' scriptures here and there,
A shootin' off his texts and tracts
Without regard to dates and facts
Or time or place, like all possessed,
Till weary sinners couldn't rest;
Fatiguin' unregenerate gents,
And causin' molls to swear immense.

He didn't snivel worth a cent,
Nor gush to any great extent,
But labored on a level plan—
A priest, but none the less a man—
Among the slums and boozing-kens,
And in the vilest holes and dens,
Amongst the drabs and owls and worse—
For saints in these here parts are skerce;

This ward ain't noways flush o' them,
It ain't no New Jerusalem.

He preached but little, argued less
But if a moll was in distress,
Or if a kinchin came to grief,
Or trouble tackled rogue or thief,
There Father John was sure to be
To blunt the edge o' misery;
And somehow managed every time
To ease despair or lessen crime.

That corner house was allus known
Around these parts as Poger's Own,
Till two pams in a drunken fight
Set the whole thing afire one night;
And where it stood they hypered round,
And blasted rocks and shoveled ground
To build the factory over there—
The one you see—and that is where
Poor Father John—God give him rest!—
Preached his last sermon, and his best.

One summer's day the thing was done;
The workmen set a blast and run.
They ain't so kerful here, I guess,
Where lives ain't worth a cent apiece,
As in the wards where things is dear,
And nothing ain't so cheap as here;
Leastwise, the first they seed or knowed,
A little chick had crossed the road.

He seemed to be just out o' bed,
Bare-legged, with nothing on his head;
Chubby and cunnin', with his hair
Blown criss-cross by the mornin' air;
Draggin' a tin horse by a string,
Without much care for anything,
A talkin' to hisself for joy—
A toddlin', kerless baby boy.

Right for the crawlin' fuse he went,
As though to find out what it meant;
Trudgin' towards the fatal spot,
Till less'n three feet off he got

From where the murderin' thing lay still,
Just waitin' fur to spring and kill;
Marching along towards his grave,
And not a soul dared go to save.

They hollered—all they durst to do;
He turned and laughed, and then bent low
To set the horsey on his feet,
And went right on a crowin' sweet.
And then a death-like silence grew
On all the tremblin', coward crew,
As each swift second seemed the last
Before the roaring of the blast.

Just then some chance or purpose brought
The priest; he saw, and quick as thought
He ran and caught the child, and turned
Just as the slumberin' powder burned,
And shot the shattered rocks around,
And with its thunder shook the ground.

The child was sheltered; Father John
Was hurt to death; without a groan
He set the baby down, then went
A step or two, but life was spent;
He tottered, looked up to the skies
With ashen face, but strange, glad eyes.
"My love, I come!" was all he said,
Sank slowly down, and so was dead.

Stranger, he left a memory here
That will be felt for many a year,
And since that day this ward has been
More human in its dens of sin.

The Gutter-Snipe and the Billy Goat.

Say, goat, look a-here!
  Give a chap a bite
Out o' that 'ere cabbage-leaf—
  'Taint no more'n right.
You're fond o' paper, now,
  Old hats and strings;
Shavin's makes a meal fur you,
  Rags and such things.
I can eat cabbage leaves—
  'Taint egzackly fair
You should have everything:
  Give a chap a share!

Ate it all up yourself.
  You mean old thing!
Oh, yes, of course, now
  You want this piece o' string!

Well, take it! Where's the kids
  Used to go with you?
What's went with 'em, goat?
  Tell a feller, do!
Usen't them there jerky things
  Jump and twist and turn?
*Ex*cuse me, mebbe they
  Was relatives o' yourn.

You don't seem to mind much
  Where they have went;
When you get a string to chew
  You are quite content;
Leastwise, you seem to be
  Easy in your mind;
Mebbe 'cos you can't complain
  If you feel inclined;
Can't express yer feelin's, tho'
  You think a good deal—
Yer tail isn't ekal to
  Expressin' wot you feel.

No tail to speak of—
  Miss it much, say?
What there is of it, though,
  Is funny in its way.
'Nuther thing that's funnier
  Is yer yaller eye;
Looks like you knowed things
  Particularly dry.
One way you're lucky, goat—
  You never ain't perplexed
A thinkin' over one day
  Wot you'll do the next.

Wish I could eat grass—
  Can't you tell me how?
Meals isn't regular—
  I'm hungry now.
Well, you and me on the
  Same footin' stands—
Both kind o' scalawags—
  Let's shake hands.

T. Geard

[illegible]

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You darned old critter, you,
How d' you s'pose it feels
To land in the gutter here
Head over heels?

Mou

* * * * *

You darned old critter, you,
  How d'you 'spose it feels
To land in the gutter here
  Head over heels?

Poor Little Joe.

Prop yer eyes wide open, Joey,
  Fur I've brought you sumpin' great.
Apples? No, a derned sight better!
  Don't you take no int'rest? Wait!
Flowers, Joe—I know'd you'd like 'em—
  Ain't them scrumptious? Ain't them high?
Tears, my boy? Wot's them fur, Joey?
  There—poor little Joe!—don't cry!

I was skippin' past a winder
  Where a bang-up lady sot,
All amongst a lot of bushes—
  Each one climbin' from a pot;
Every bush had flowers on it—
  Pretty? Mebbe not! Oh, no!
Wish you could 'a seen 'em growin',
  It was such a stunnin' show.

Well, I thought of you, poor feller,
  Lyin' here so sick and weak,
Never knowin' any comfort,
  And I puts on lots o' cheek.
"Missus," says I, "if you please, mum,
  Could I ax you for a rose?
For my little brother, missus—
  Never seed one, I suppose."

Then I told her all about you—
  How I bringed you up—poor Joe!
(Lackin' women folks to do it).
  Sich a imp you was, you know—
Till yer got that awful tumble,
  Jist as I had broke yer in
(Hard work, too) to earn your livin'
  Blackin' boots for honest tin.

How that tumble crippled of you,
  So's you couldn't hyper much—
Joe, it hurted when I seen you
  Fur the first time with yer crutch.

"But," I says, "he's laid up now, mum,
'Pears to weaken every day;"
Joe, she up and went to cuttin'-
That's the how of this bokay.

Say! it seems to me, ole feller,
You is quite yourself to-night
Kind o' chirk—it's been a fortnit
Sence yer eyes has been so bright.
Better? Well, I'm glad to hear it!
Yes, they're mighty pretty, Joe.
Smellin' of 'em's made you happy?
Well, I thought it would, you know

Never see the country, did you?
Flowers growin' everywhere!
Some time when you're better, Joey,
Mebbe I kin take you there.
Flowers in heaven? 'M—I s'pose so;
Dunno much about it, though;
Ain't as fly as wot I might be
On them topics, little Joe.

But I've heerd it hinted somewheres
  That in heaven's golden gates
Things is everlastin' cheerful—
  B'lieve that's what the Bible states.
Likewise, there folks don't git hungry:
  So good people, w'en they dies,
Finds theirselves well fixed forever
  Joe, my boy, wot ails yer eyes?

Thought they looked a little sing'ler.
  Oh, no! Don't you have no fear;
Heaven was made fur such as you is—
  Joe, wot makes you look so queer?
Here—wake up! Oh, don't look that way!
  Joe! My boy! Hold up yer head!
Here's yer flowers—you dropped 'em Joey.
  Oh, my God, can Joe be dead?

THE OLD FIREMAN'S STORY.

Yes, yes; you've got a fine machine—a beautiful machine;
A handsome critter, burnished well, and smart and neat and clean.
I s'pose now, with your horses and your telegraph alarms,
And fire and steam to do the work, instead of hands and arms,
It ain't so hard on flesh and blood, and like as not the fires
Has less to brag of fighting steam, that never slacks nor tires;
But, boys, those old machines of ours—we loved 'em mighty well,
And liked to hear the music of the good old fire-bell!

Yes, thank you, boys, I wouldn't mind to sit and chat
awhile,
And have a pipe, and hear you tell about the modern
style ;
But somehow, boys, I don't believe, in these here
temperance days,
You get the same enjoyment from a roasting, roar-
ing blaze
Like what we did in olden times, when through the
sleeping town
The watch-tower clanged the loud alarm. It did the
business brown,
And fetched the night-caps out of bed to see the fun,
you know,
When I was chief of Neptune Five, some thirty years
ago.

I feel at home amongst you, boys ; it carries me
away
To times when our red shirts and belts was thought
to be quite gay.
And then the girls—poke bonnets, eh ?—would al-
ways have an eye

For any gallus fireman. God bless the girls! says I.
I s'pose some of you may have heard about the little strike
That makes me easy nowadays and independent like;
For though I'd take no payment then, it didn't come so ill
When clean five thousand dollars, boys, was left me in a will.

It happened on a summer's night, in eighteen forty-two:
A fine house on a corner up in Second Avenue
Took fire in the basement, and before the people woke
The flames were raging down below—the house was full of smoke.
When we got there the people was a dropping, white with fear,
To the roof of an extension from the second story rear.
They were safe; but thrilling through us rang a cry of wild despair
From out an upper window, and we saw a woman there—

A woman with a little child held to her bosom tight.
I was up on the extension in a jiffy at the sight,
And I climbed in at the window through the smoke that rushed out thick,
And I groped my way up blindly—not a second, though, too quick,
For the fire was gaining headway fast; and when I found the pair
It was bursting out where I climbed in, and shooting up the stair.
Too late to save them from below—I saw that plain enough;
I don't know how I done it, but I got 'em to the roof.

As we come up a cheer broke out from anxious crowds beneath;
But still my chance was mighty slim to save us all from death.
No ladder could have reached us through the smoke and flame below;
The next roof twenty foot away—an awful gap, you know.

Cut off, it seemed, from human aid, no means of rescue nigh;
Alone between a blazing hell, a black and lurid sky;
Three of us, face to face with death, hemmed in with terrors wild,
And one a trembling woman was, and one a little child.

I never see a sight like that—the mother kneeling there,
Her arms around the little boy, her face upturned in prayer.
If ever human agony reached right up through the skies,
Then did the supplication of those piteous, pleading eyes.
Likely heaven took an interest the little one to save,
For now they're on the other roof—my boys so prompt and brave!
And now they've hauled a ladder up, and now it's shoved across;
But such a bridge! You'd better b'lieve the thing was perilous.

The mother saw and shuddered; cast one more glance around
Upon the gathering, fiery doom, and heard its sullen sound;
Then kissed the child with clinging lips and held him out to me:
"Save *him*, save *him*—my precious boy! *My* life is naught," said she.
I took him, started; rung by rung I stepped the chasm o'er,
Through stifling gusts the fire sent up with dull and angry roar;
Till, safe across, the child I gave, then turned to cross again
To help the mother; but I saw the peril would be vain!

She had watched the dizzy journey with a mother's eager eye,
Until we stood in safety; then she heard a little cry,
And saw her baby's outstretched arms. Another look to God:

"Yes, darling; mamma's coming now"—and forth the woman trod.
Her feet were bare, her hair was loose and streaming on the night;
The lurid glow lit up her face with red, unearthly light.
I tell you now *my* nerves were shook performing of the feat
That that pale woman undertook through fiery gusts of heat.

No doubt her feet was guided: like a spirit swift she came,
While the roof behind her, as she left, broke into sweeping flame:
But when the dreadful journey in safety she had passed,
Her woman's weakness triumphed and went back on her at last,
And she fell amongst us fainting; but I reckon such a cheer
As went up on that occasion would a done you good to hear.

It was nip and tuck 'tween life and death for all of us
that night;
But death was euchred. That's all, boys; I'd thank
you for a light.

Warden, Keep a Place for Me.

Discharged again! Yes, I am free,
But, Warden, keep a place for me;
For freedom means that I must go
Out in the wind and rain and snow,
To fight with hunger, shame and cold—
A woman gray and worn and old;
To clothe myself in rags again,
And seek some wretched, narrow den.
And after that what must be done?
Steal? Beg? Hard lines for any one.
To work is easier. I would try,
But there's no work for such as I.
A fine thing, truly, to be free—
But, Warden, keep a place for me;

For I'll come back. It's seven years
Since first I entered here in tears.

"Drunk and disorderly" I came,
And felt the burden and the shame,
The prison taint, the outlaw's dread,
When first behind his hopeless tread
The gates clang to with dreadful sound
And the dark prison walls close round.

But when I went away, I said:
"If I can earn my daily bread
I'll work my fingers off before
I'll wear a convict's dress once more."
'Twas easy said—I meant it, too.
Work? Is there work enough to do
For those who spend their weary lives
Like toiling bees in busy hives,
And starve at last? When willing hands,
That never broke the law's commands,
Are idle by the thousands, how
Can jail-birds keep a virtuous vow?

No work, but all the same I found
The time for meals would come around;

No work, but time enough to think,
And that's the easy road to drink.
Who cared, who cares, that I was then
"Drunk and disorderly" again?
Who cares that ever with the best
I was a woman like the rest?
Who cares that one day in my life
I was a happy, joyous wife?
None care, and I care less than they,
And curse the man and curse the day.

How did I know that he would be
A drunken scoundrel, dragging me
Down in the mire? Alas, the life
He led me! Oh, the bitter strife
'Twixt love and hate! He went away
And left me with my little May—
My little child! My little pearl!
My pretty brown-eyed baby-girl!
Bah—that was only childhood's grace!
She grew up with her father's face,
Her father's selfish, wicked heart;

Grew up to take an evil part;
Grew up to soil her mother's name,
And cover it with double shame.

But I've a little baby dress—
The one soft vein of tenderness
That's run through all these hateful years—
I've wet it many a time with tears,
And many a time at dead of night
I've clasped it to my bosom tight.
What for? Because it means for me
A simple, sinless memory;
Because it means there was a time
When I, now gray with want and crime,
Old jail-bird as I am to-day,
Knew how to love and dared to pray.

What did I do? How could I know
That things would go against me so?
How could I help it? Did I plan
The fate that bound me to that man?—

The hard, blind fate that dragged me down
Among the wretches of the town?—
That snatched away all hope, all chance,
And twisted every circumstance
Against me, till at last I stood
Stripped of my very womanhood?
I could not dare to stop and think—
Was it my fault I took to drink?

No, I'm not fit for liberty;
It ain't a wholesome thing for me;
The jail takes care of me too well.
Better to be locked in a cell,
Where all is clean, and sleep is sweet,
Than roam the misery-haunted street;
Better the work they give us here
Than what awaits me when I'm clear;
Better the silence we must keep
Than drunken cries and curses deep;
Better the dull days free from pain
Than shattered nerves and throbbing brain;

Better the quiet, sober life
Than yonder city's desperate strife;
Better the prison's homely fare,
Better the prison's watchful care.
Better for me than liberty—
So, Warden, keep a place for me.

Run Over.

Sit down close beside me, Billy—
  I'm so glad you've come at last;
I was 'feared they wouldn't find you,
  And my time is slippin' fast.
Stoop down, Billy—talkin' hurts me,
  I'm bad off for breath, you see;
One of them fire-engines done it—
  Guess them horses finished me.

They runned over me in Broadway—
  Well, it's done—no use to cry;
When them chaps is in a hurry
  Nothin' else don't signify.
Wait a minute—how that hurted!
  Bill, it's ruther hard to bear;
I wa'n't harmin' anybody—
  Only sellin' papers there.

Bill, it won't be long—I'm goin';
  Yes, that's wot the doctors said;
But I wish I knowed more certain
  Wot it's like w'en folks is dead.
Wish I'd been a better feller;
  Stuck right to the Golden Rule;
Minded all them other lessons
  Wot we learned at mission school.

There is Mamie—Bill, I would 'ave
  Liked to said good-by to her;
No! no use to try and fetch her;
  It's too late—she lives too fur.
I believe she would 'ave kissed me,
  If she'd seen me come to this;
I'd 'ave stood it almost cheerful,
  So's to had one lovin' kiss.

Bill, you tell her how I liked her,
  Loved her hard—'tain't nothin' new;
She has always knowed it, Billy,
  And I b'lieve she likes me, too;

And I used to think that maybe,
  When we'd both growed up, y' know,
It might come I'd marry of her—
  Bill, it is hard lines to go!

But, for keeps, it's crowdin' on me,
  Wot that teacher said one day,
'Bout the blessed love of Jesus,
  Don't you mind? He used to say
Little folks was most particular
  Free to come to Him up there;
Guess it wouldn't be no damage
  If I wentured on a prayer:

Jesus, I'm a little feller
  Got runned over by mistake;
God is good to little fellers—
  So I've heerd—for Jesus' sake;
I ain't always knowed my duty,
  But I've tried to do wot's right;
Please to take care of me, somehow,
  W'en I'm lyin' dead to-night.

Then there's two I hates to part from—
  Mamie dear, and Bill, likewise ;
Oh, God, please to try and fetch us
  All together w'en they dies.
There! I guess—I'm goin'—Billy!
  Never mind, old chap—don't cry!
Oh, there's Mamie! Kiss me, Mamie!
  Why, just see that mornin' sky!

RETRIBUTION.

Here, you policeman, just step inside.
  See this young woman here?
Only just died.
    Facts in the case look to be
  Off color—queer;
    Cause of death, as you see,
Stabbed in the side.

Me and Maud Myrtle was standing right here,
  Taking a drink;
In come a loafer, chock full o' beer,
  Leading a little child sweet as a pink,
Not more'n three year old, pretty and bright—
Such little chaps as him is good for the sight.
First thing we knowed, the villain was r'arin'
And cursin' and swearin',
  To make the child drink.

Maud was the nearest by,
Sprung at him with a cry,
  Dashed the glass down.
Glared the brute's evil eye,
  Wicked his frown.
Quick as the lightning's gleam
  Flashed out the villain's knife.

Maud gave one gurgling scream
  As the steel reached the life,
Tore through her tender side—
So the girl died.

Policeman, there she lies,
  Resting at last.
Trouble was twins with her,
  That is all past.
Her life was hard enough,
Bore on her rather rough,
  But to see that peaceful face,
Pale and sweet beneath the light,
  Goes to argue that the place

Where she's traveled to to-night,
Whatever sort of world it is,
Can't be worse for her than this.

The murderer? Yes,
  Yonder he lies,
Dead in the dirt,
  Like a dog dies.
Some say it's doubtful if hangin's played out,
It didn't suit me to admit of a doubt.
  Think I'm wanted! Do you, though?
  Well, let's go.

GONE TO SEED.

This life is a puzzle, and nothing
  Appears to be rightly—a—fixed;
A riddle without any answer,
  A game where the pieces are—a—mixed.
Now I am essentially—busted,
  My purse in despair I scan,
Yet my tastes, by a dismal—a—paradox,
  Are those of a gentleman.

I am fond of the opera—very;
  To go every night I would choose;
I would also delight to encourage
  The grand histrionic—a—muse.
But, my means being sadly deficient,
  These charming allurements I flee;
And I slake my æsthetical cravings
  In the—a—pit of the Bowery.

My appearance is rendered peculiar
  By a mezzo-tint under one eye;
Though it is not a permanent fixture,
  The effect is not cheerful, nor—a—high;
My proboscis is also abraded,
  And looks, strictly speaking—a—queer.
These damages, I must acknowledge,
  Were occasioned by too much—a—beer.

I go in for pictures and statues,
  The refinements of art, and—a—all that;
The Academy, lately, I visited
  (Feeling low, on account of my hat);
I heard a fine lady remarking:
  "Chiaro-oscuro, you see;"
I turned to observe the fair critic,
  And found she was looking at—a—me.

My paternal and family instincts
  Are depressed to a point that is sad,
I should very much like to have sampled
  The pleasures of being—a—dad;

KING

[illegible]

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[illegible] b—a—me.

[illegible] is sad,
[illegible] sampled
[illegible]—dad;

I HEARD A FAIR LADY REMARKING
"CHIARO-OSCURO, YOU SEE,"
I TURNED TO OBSERVE THE FAIR CRITIC
AND FOUND SHE WAS LOOKING AT-A-ME.

And I recently offered proposals
  To a person—a—female, in fact;
But she was not partial to penury,
  And I was egregiously—sacked.

When I say that this life is not mirthful,
  Nor what it is cracked up to be,
I would not be misapprehended,
  For I know that the fault is with me.
And so, as I go about seedy,
  Peccavi is all of my—a—psalm;
I mourn over life's raveled edges—
  Mea culpa!—Dam!

THE BAR-TENDER'S STORY.

When I knowed him at first there was suthin',
  A sort of a general air,
That was wery particular pleasin',
  And what you might call—debonair.
I'm aware that expression is Frenchy,
  And hifalutin', perhaps,
Which accounts that I have the acquaintance
  Of several quality chaps,

And such is the way they converses.
  But speakin' of this here young man,
Apparently Nature had shaped him
  On a sort of a liberal plan.
Had guv him good looks and good language,
  And manners expressin' with vim
His belief in hisself, and that others
  Was just as good fellers as him.

Well, this chap wasn't stuck up, by no means,
  Nor inclined to be easy put down;
And was thought to be jolly agreeable
  Wherever he went around town.
He used to come in for his beverage
  Quite regular, every night;
And I took a consid'able interest
  In mixin' the thing about right.

A judicious indulgence in liquids
  It is natural for me to admire;
But I hev to admit that for some folks
  They is pison complete and entire;
For rum, though a cheerful companion,
  As a boss is the devil's own chum;
And this chap, I am sorry to state it,
  Was floored in a wrastle with rum.

For he got to increasin' his doses,
  And took 'em more often, he did;
And it growed on him faster and faster
  Till inter a bummer he slid.

I was grieved to observe this here feller
  A shovin' hisself down the grade,
And I lectured him onto it sometimes,
  At the risk of it's injurin' trade.

At last he got thunderin' seedy,
  And lost his respect for hisself,
And all his high notions of honor
  Was bundled away on the shelf.
But at times he was dreadful remorseful
  Whenever he'd stop for to think,
And he'd swear to reform hisself frequent,
  And end it by takin' a drink.

What saved that young feller? A woman!
  She done it the singlerest way.
He come into the bar-room one evenin'
  (He hadn't been drinkin' that day),
And sot hisself down to a table
  With a terrible sorrowful face,
And he sot there a groanin' repeated,
  And callin' hisself a gone case.

He was thinkin' and thinkin' and thinkin',
  And cussin' hisself and his fate,
And ended his thinkin', as usual,
  By orderin' a Bourbon straight.
He was holdin' the glass in his fingers,
  When into the place, from the street,
There come a young gal like a spirit,
  With a face that was wonderful sweet.

And she glided right up to the table,
  And took the glass gently away,
And she says to him: "George, it is over;
  I am only a woman to-day!
I rejected you once, in my anger,
  But I come to you lowly and meek;
For I can't live without you, my darling;
  I thought I was strong, but I'm weak.

You are bound in a terrible bondage,
  And I come, love, to share it with you;
Is there shame in the deed? I can bear it,
  For, at last, to my love I am true;

I have turned from the home of my childhood,
And I come to you, lover and friend,
Leaving comfort, contentment and honor,
And I'll stay to the terrible end.

Is there hunger and want in the future?
I will share them with you, and not shrink!
And together we'll join in the pleasures,
The woes and the dangers of drink."
Then she raised up the glass, firm and steady,
But her face was as pale as the dead—
"Here's to wine and the joy of carousals,
The songs and the laughter," she said.

Then he riz up, his face like a tempest,
And took the glass out of her hand,
And slung it away, stern and savage—
And I tell you his manner was grand!
And he says: "I have done with it, Nelly,
And I'll turn from the ways I have trod,
And I'll live to be worthy of you, dear,
So help me, a merciful God!"

What more was remarked, it is needless
  For me to attempt to relate;
It was some time ago since it happened,
  But the sequel is easy to state;
I seen that same feller last Monday,
  Lookin' nobby and handsome and game;
He was wheelin' a vehicle, gen'lemen,
  And a baby was into the same.

A Catastrophe.

No human being
  Who saw that sight,
But felt a shudder
  Of pale affright.
He sat in a window
  Three stories high,
A little baby,
  With no one nigh.
A stranger saw him,
  And stopped to stare;
A crowd soon gathered
  To watch him there.

A gleam—a flutter!
  In airy flight,
Came past the window
  A butterfly bright.

From fields of clover
  And perfumed air,
Wayfaring insect,
  What brought you there?
The baby saw it,
  And eagerly
Reached out to catch it,
  And crowed with glee.

With fat, pink fingers
  Reached out—and fell!
The awful horror
  No tongue can tell.
Poor little baby,
  So sweet and bright!
Pale faces quivered
  And lips grew white.
Weak women fainted,
  Strong men grew weak,
And rose one woman's
  Heart-piercing shriek.

Hurrah for the awning!
  Upon the fly
It caught the youngster,
  And tossed him high.
The bounce prodigious
  Made baby scowl;
He caught his breath, sir,
  And set up a howl.
All blessed the awning
  That had no flaw;
But a madder baby
  You never saw.

Rum and Veracity.

I'm extremely fond of candor, and encourage its display,
And I practice it myself in a retiring, modest way—
Unobtrusively, of course, because I know that people say
It is one of those abstractions which are totally *passé*.

I am led to this acknowledgment by way of an excuse
For the thinness of the topic which I wish to introduce;
Being nothing but a statement of the method new and strange
Whereby an individual relieved me of some change.

'Tis the acme of simplicity to give a beggar cash,
And, instead of being generous—that is, imbecile and rash

There are organized societies where you may bid them go;
This was Mr. Stewart's method, and it pays the best, you know.

Well, I chanced to be forecasting what the future may unfold,
When the party of reform shall have renewed the age of gold;
But a party of the other sort came suddenly in view,
And the party of the first part vanished into ether blue.

The party who approached was ragged, dirty and forlorn,
Such a wreck as rum hands over to the world's unpitying scorn;
But a twinkle in his watery eye disarmed me from the start,
And the candor of his statement got the better of my heart.

For he didn't tell the story of a poor, sick wife at home;
He wasn't raising just enough to take him back to Rome:
He didn't speak of hunger, nor refer to better days;
He didn't ask for work, and didn't swear to mend his ways.

But he said: "Beg pardon, Cap'en," and his voice was thin and weak;
"I hevn't had a drop to drink fur just about one week:
Can't you tip a busted statesman cash enough to get a dram?
Fur it's gettin' ruther serious—I'm a little shook, I am."

Well, he got it, and he spent it for the rum that wrecked him so,
To appease the pain that gnawed him, the disease that brought him low,

The horrible, fierce craving that was wearing life
away—
And the poor old blear-eyed sinner was some happier
that day

Wrong? You'd preach the standard maxims? Soothe
the sufferer with a text?
Make this world as hard as may be, to prepare him
for the next?
Friend, the silver tongue of charity must plead at
last for you,
Or I'm sorry for your chances, when this little life is
through.

THE UNATTAINABLE.

It chanced that as I wandered on my way,
One summer's day,
With thoughts that tended unto fancies quaint,
I came anear a streamlet running clear,
Like school-boy glad what time he flies restraint;
And on its brink
A contemplative ass had paused to think.

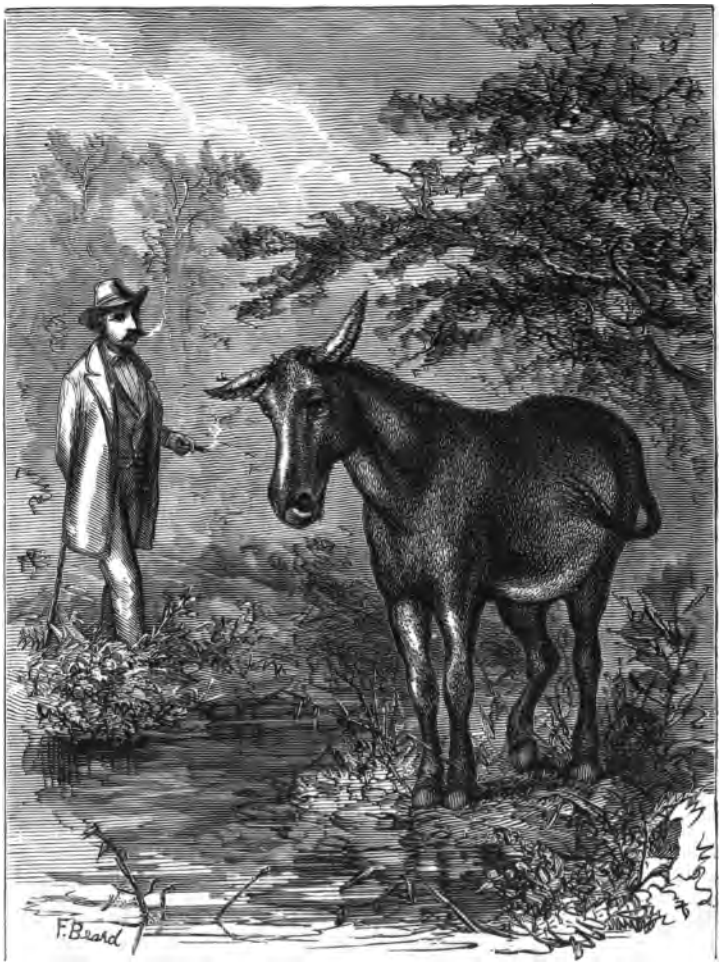
He stood reflective, gazing far away,
As who should say:
This slumbrous summer noon is nowise fit
For aught of toil or any vain turmoil,
But in the lap of dreamy thoughts to sit,
And gather so
Such peace of mind as lazy asses know.

Quite lost in contemplation deep was he,
Nor heeded me;

One ear did somewhat droop, as with the weight
  Of portly fly, which gravely hung thereby,
In seeming comfort and contentment great;
          Nor deemed that he
Was otherwhere than eke a fly should be.

"O ass," I said, "what perfect rest is thine,
          What peace benign!
Dost thou not know such pleasure cannot last?
  Hast thou no fear of blows still due thee here
As debits on the page by fate forecast?"
          He offered no reply,
But with his hind-foot calmly brushed that fly.

"O ass," I said, "the pleasant hours are few
          Thy journey through.
Dost thou not dread what yet may come to pass?
  Methinks, perchance, thine utter nonchalance
May be because, in truth, thou art an ass."
          Thus I, in brief;
He naught, but used his tongue for handkerchief.



And on its brink
A contemplative Ass had paused to think.

"O ass," I said, "canst thou not teach to me
Serenity,
And full enjoyment of the passing hour?
Without or vain regret, or ceaseless, weary fret,
Toward what future ills may darkly lower?"
He turned his head.
Full-solemn winkèd he, but no word said.

Nor have I ever learned the potent plan,
From ass or man,
Of how to rest content with present good,
Without forebodings vain, or retrospective pain
To mar the most complacent, peaceful mood ·
Nor is it true
That any folk but asses reach thereto.

THE PALMER.

WRITTEN FOR AND RECITED BY MISS MARY L. RUNYON.

A holy man returned from Palestine?
  Now let the castle gates be opened wide!
In God's name bid him enter; food and wine
  Set forth, that so to him this even-tide
May joyous be. Mayhap it chances so
That he somewhat of our dear liege may know.

God grant he may have tidings! Hither now
  He comes; worn, weary, bent and slow;
A monkish cowl doth overhang his brow;
  They seat him at the board; he bends him low
In prayerful wise; I cannot stay apart—
I must speak with him straight. Peace, throbbing
  heart!

Thy blessing, father!—Nay, but sit and eat.
  A cup of water? Sure thy vows must be
Austere indeed, forbidding wine and meat
  On weary journeys. Prithee now to me
Unfold if aught thou knowest of my lord,
Who went to Paynim lands with his good sword.

Thóu sayest well; he was the stateliest knight
  That ever marched to those far-distant shores.
God wot, I know that on the breast of fight
  Ever in front his crested helmet towers!
The prince he was of princeliest Christian men.
What must he be to frighted Saracen?

I mind me, Palmer, how my bosom swelled
  When first I saw him couch his pennoned lance;
In merry joust his valiant right arm quelled
  The best and bravest of the knights of France;
And, when victorious in the gallant fray,
He crowned me Queen of Beauty on that day.

And when he brought me hither as his bride,
  And through these gates we entered hand in hand,
No queen was ever flushed with more of pride,
  No dame so happy was in all the land;
And when he armed him for the holy war,
God speed I gave him, though my heart was sore.

Alas the day! My memory lingers yet
  Upon the scene of parting that befell;
He stooped him, while his prancing steed did fret,
  To kiss the little child he loved so well;
Then sternly rode he forth, my kingly one,
And all his armor glistened in the sun.

Come hither, Hubert! This the comely boy
  I held in arms the while he rode apace.
My Hubert! Thou art still my only joy!
  See, doth he not reveal his knightly race?
Will not my lord, when he doth come again,
Rejoice to see his boy admired of men?

Thou tremblest with fatigue, good Palmer; yet,
  Before thou goest to thy rest, I pray,
Tell me but this: My noble spouse hath met
  With naught of ill, so far—so far away?
What sayest thou, dreadful monk, beneath thy cowl?
Perdition seize thee for thy tidings foul!

Return no more again to France and me?
  At hands of swarthy Paynim hosts he bled?
His fallen, lifeless body thou didst see?
  Jesu have mercy! Dead! My lord is dead!
Thou liest, monk! Ah, pardon! See, I kneel;
My heart is breaking, and my brain doth reel!

Bear with me, father! Nay, thou devilish one,
  Why cam'st thou here to strike me dead with woe?
Turn round thy face and see what thou hast done!
  Fling back that cowl! Thy fateful features show!
Why hidest thou thy face? Alas, I rave—
My peerless knight, my love, is in the grave!

Mother divine, support me! O sweet Christ, to Thee
A stricken, lonely woman here doth bow.
Monk! Monk! What flashing eyes are those I see?
Strange stature hast thou gotten, even now!
Away, I fear thee! What! in armor drest?
Dear lord, my husband, take me to thy breast!

DROWNED.

Found floating in the river?
  You towed him in to-day?
Yes, his habits were peculiar—
  My husband, did you say?
My husband was as handsome,
  And as tall, and straight, and strong—
Wait a minute—am I dreaming,
  Or has my poor head gone wrong?

I remember! I was married
  Such a long, long time ago;
Yes—the lights, and flowers, and music!
  I was happy, then, I know.
Such a strange thing to be happy
  Was I happy? Was it me,
With the wreath of orange blossoms
  In my hair? How could it be?

But it was. Yes, I remember
  Clearly now—it was divine!
All the pride and joy of loving
  And of being loved were mine.
And my Harry was so noble,
  And so brave, and tall, and strong—
But this dark thing in the river!
  What is this? There's something wrong!

Something wrong and something missing!
  All this happened long ago—
Oh, so long ago! Such ages
  Since my Harry loved me so!
Why, I had almost forgotten
  Those old days of hope and joy,
When my lover stood beside me,
  My own stately, clear-eyed boy!

It is pleasant, but I can't think
  What reminded me of him;
For those memories of old days
  Had become so vague and dim.

Something brought to mind my Harry—
  No! no! no! It was not that!
Not that dark thing in the river!
  No such ghastly thing as that!

Well, those happy days of loving
  Could not last—they could not last!
All that happiness I speak of
  Ended ages in the past.
And my husband, my poor husband,
  Was so careless and so free,
And his habits were peculiar—
  Yes, and they were death to me!

And the years grew long and longer,
  Lengthened out with pain and care,
Till their weary burden crushed me,
  Till they crazed me with despair;
And the other day he left me
  (Until then my head was right).
Dead, you say? Drowned in the river?
  Well, I don't believe it, quite!

Let me see his face—is this it?
  Why, there's no resemblance here:
God of heaven! It is my Harry!
  Oh, my love, what ails you, dear?
See his handsome face! My Harry!
  But he's sleeping—don't you see?
There, I'll sing to you, my darling,
  While your head rests on my knee.

By the river, by the river,
  Sleep, my darling, sleep and dream;
By the waves that murmur softly
  As they ripple down the stream.
Sleep, my love, the light is fading;
  Sleep, my love, and have no fear;
Peaceful shadows gather round us,
  And the welcome night is near.

[illegible]

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"THERE! I'LL SING TO YOU, MY DARLING,
WHILE YOUR HEAD RESTS ON MY KNEE."

DECORATION DAY.

READ BY W. A. CROFFUT AT THE DECORATION OF LINCOLN'S MONUMENT IN UNION SQUARE, MAY 30TH, 1877.

Comrades, the time seems far away
That saw us marshaled for the fray,
And dim the memory of that day,
    Like an old story;
For peace hath conflicts year by year,
That waste the soul and scar and sear,
And some of us are maimed, I fear,
    Yet miss the glory.

And it is well, as swift years flee,
To fan the flame of memory,
And sometimes call to mind that we,
    Mid cannon's rattle,

In those dark days of doubt and gloom,
Defied the shadow of the tomb,
Fronted the thunder and the doom,
And marched to battle.

Amid the cares that weigh us down,
Let us, for once, put on the crown,
And claim the glory and renown,
And proudly claim it:
Once *we* were heroes! Let us be
Stronger to meet adversity,
More faithful to that memory,
Nor ever shame it.

So shall the fortunate ones who fell
Be honored more and honored well,
With whiter wreaths of immortelle,
And worthier mourning.
But yet we are not mourners—nay,
We strew their graves with flowers to-day,
With brightest blossoms of the May,
A brave adorning.

No cypress leaves, no weeds of woe,
No solemn funeral dirges slow,
No anguished moaning, sad and low,
    No passionate weeping;
But with glad hearts and hands we bring
These splendors of the wakened spring,
Their fame alone remembering,
    Their laurels keeping.

Remembering only that they died
As heroes; and that side by side
We stood with them in martial pride,
    Shoulder to shoulder;
Recalling those eventful days,
The weary march, the bivouac's blaze,
The parley with the gallant grays—
    None braver, bolder;

The hush ere fighting was begun,
The bullet's hiss, the opening gun,
The long lines sweeping grandly on,
    The rout, the rally;

The memorable fields where fought
The noblest prey Death ever sought,
Where Kearney's clarion voice rang out,
"Gaily, boys, gaily!"

And all the stirring scenes that shame
These sordid days so dull and tame—
Comrades, the dead whose deathless fame
We live to cherish,
In their grand immortality
Stand diademed with victory—
Nations will mourn no loss when we
Supinely perish.

Bring flowers, then, and every year
Renew these memories strong and clear,
And teach your children to revere
The golden story;
Nor let them ever turn away
From graves of gallant boys in gray,
Brave foes they were—their tombs array
With equal glory.

For such the lesson they would teach,
Our heroes, could their voices reach
From silent graves, with august speech,
    To listening ages;
Such words great Lincoln spake withal—
Malice to none, good will to all—
Words that will live, while nations fall,
    On history's pages.

Mask and Domino.

IRENE DE VENTIMIGLIA AND THE DUCHESS MORELLA.

My lady Irene, thou art wan to-night,
  And yet, but now, beneath thy domino,
Methought thine eyes were marvelously bright;
  I did not think to find thee trembling so;
    Come, come, take heart of grace—
What! Dreadest thou to see a woman's face?

A man's would suit thee best! Well, I did think
  A little frolic would have plagued thee naught;
I did not look to see thee wince and shrink
  At my unmasking. Tell me now thy thought:
    Doth not this page's gear
Of blood-red crimson well become me, dear?

Still pale and silent? What strange thing is this?
  These are my lord's apartments, and I think

Somewhere there must be wine. Ah! yes, here 'tis.
These tears of Christ will help thee. Sweetheart,
drink!
Is't not almost divine?
Ah! Lachryma Christi, thou'rt a wondrous wine!

How I did fool thee, child! Forgive my glee,
I cannot choose but laugh. . . . 'Twas writ this
way:
"Irene, my sweet, one waits who worships thee,
And this the token: Love me, love, I pray!"
Now, was it not so writ?
What chance did favor me in guessing it?

O, thou coquette! Thou sly, demure coquette!
Nay, sweet Marchesa, I condemn thee not·
I am myself no prude, and yet—and yet—
No sin is quite so sinful till found out.
It is one thing to sin,
It is another to be caught therein.

Oh, I have noted how my lord of late
  Hath sued thy favor—but I count it naught;
'Tis what we look for in the marriage state—
  Is 't not, Marchesa? Dost thou sorrow aught
    When thy good lord doth stray?
Thou dost not fret, I warrant. Well-a-day!

I do remember—laughable it seems—
  How once the Duke—ha! ha!—did swear to me
That my blue eyes were brighter than bright dreams;
  But, faith, it was but lover's gallantry,
    For now he doth entreat
Thy twilight hair and dusk eyes darkly sweet.

Art ill, dear friend? Dost feel the need of air?
  I'll throw this casement open to the night. . . .
'Tis strange how men do value eyes and hair!
  So!—Is not yon fair planet wondrous bright?
    What mournful sounds prevail!
Is it the moonlight makes thee look so pale?

How lovely is the moon's serene, sweet face!
  No woman hath such beauty, yet, alway,
Men have no eyes for aught but woman's grace;
  Strange, is it not? And, stranger still to-day
    The face they loveliest call
To-morrow hath no loveliness at all.

What wretched creatures we—that live to make
  The sport of men; and each new lover seems
Too fond and true a loving heart to break;
  Then comes the day that shatters all our dreams,
    And, at the bitter end,
We learn to hate each lover and each friend.

Look out upon the hushed and breathless night;
  The tranquil stars alone are always true.
What's this? A storm has quenched their steadfast light.
  That flash was fearful! See, the lights burn blue.
    'Tis ominous, my dear,
This sudden, dreadful storm—hast thou no fear?

Marchesa, dearest, surely thou art ill!
  That wine has hurt thee? Is it so? Alas.
Fool! I did give it thee with right good will!
  With mine own hand I did prepare that glass!
    'Twill do its work full well!
'Twill send thee straight to heaven, my dear—or hell!

Aha! My time has come! I am his wife!
  I am the woman that he swore to love!
And, traitress, thou dost pay me with thy life
  For this intrigue! Yea, by the saints above,
    Thy life is small requite
For all the hate I've smothered till this night!

That letter—'twas the Duke's!—and this the place
  The treacherous schemer for a trysting gave!
Yea, writhe and moan and hide thy livid face!
  And die, and rot in a dishonored grave!
    He'll find thee here anon
A festering corpse, thou wanton—ah! she's gone!

The Iron Maiden.

Bring in the prisoner now; his chains, I wot,
Hang heavy on his burdened limbs, but not
So heavy as upon his soul doth weigh
The load of crime he expiates this day.
(He comes, his eyes ablaze with haughty fire.)
Now chain him to yon pillar! So—retire,
And wait without. I have some words to say,
Ere to its doom I speed his soul away.

My lord Fieschi, thou art doomed to death.
Outside these walls the summer's murmuring breath
Doth make sweet music unto listening ears,
And all the world beguileth from its tears;
Green is the grass, and pleasant is the sea;
Peaceful the sky, and breezes, wandering free,
Do wanton midst of fair magnolia trees;
Rejoice not thou! Thou hast no part with these!

Thy business is with Death! And thou shalt rest
Thy dying head on no fond woman's breast;
Nor for thy fate shall any tear be shed;
Nor for thy peace shall any mass be said.
No priest shall shrive thee—it were blasphemy
To mock high heaven with prayers for such as thee.
Unshriven, unwept, thou goest forth alone
To such damnation as thy deeds have won.

That scorn upon thy lip is fine, indeed,
My lord Fieschi. May it serve thy need
When thou dost stand before the awful rod
Of an insulted and avenging God.
To me thy scorn is nothing. It cannot
Avail to stir my steadfast soul one jot.
It is not vengeance moveth me to slay,
But even-handed justice rules this day.

Yet once I prayed to be revenged on thee,
When I lay rotting in captivity
In thy deep dungeons, and thou wouldst not kill,
Because to make me suffer was thy will.

And it was fearful! In my dark despair,
Athwart the gloom shone gleams of golden hair,
And lips I loved did whisper maddening things,
And memory lashed me with a thousand stings.

Son of the devil! what didst thou with my love?
Nay, well I know she is a saint above.
Bravo, thou canst not move me with that sneer—
Justice, not passion, doth confront thee here.
See, I am calm. Inexorable fate
Hath overtaken thee, not human hate.
I hate thee not at all, even while I kill.
(God! can I ever break that stubborn will?)

The Ghibellini cause was naught to thee,
But that in warfare thou hadst scope to be
The murderous ruffian. Rapine was thy play,
Mercy and peace before thee fled away.
And for the woe thou workèdst maid and wife
No flash of shining steel shall end thy life,
But thou shalt die in torture and disgrace,
Within yon Iron Maiden's dark embrace.

No idle wanton, she! Behold, my lord,
How ill for thee that thou didst 'scape the sword.
These sightless features—pray thee, note them well—
On them no lightsome smile did ever dwell.
See, now, on subtle hinges, turning slow,
One-half doth come away; 'twas fashioned so
To fit thy stature; and these iron bands
Will hold thee moveless as yon pillar stands.

My Iron Maiden hath no heart to break;
Whom she hath favored lives not to forsake;
Whom she imprisoneth in cold embrace
Shall never look upon another's face;
Well would it be for many a mortal maid,
Were they no likelier to be betrayed.
Well had it been for my sweet love, indeed——
No more of that! I charge thee, now, take heed!

When thou art shut herein, this fatal screw
Will cause these iron spikes to pierce thee through.
This for thy lying mouth, these for thine eyes,
And these, and these, despite thy groans and cries.

That sneer again? What, demon, laughest thou?
By heaven! but I'll subdue thee yet! Ho, now,
Come hither, men! Seize on him! Bind him in!
Quick! quick! that so his torments may begin.

Wilt laugh again? Away with such deceit!
Yea, this is my revenge, and it is sweet!
Now turn the screw! Such joy was never mine!
Death and the devil! will he give no sign?
He robs me of my vengeance. Turn again
The fatal screw! Again! Again! Again!
His torture must be fearful! Ha!—a groan!
Once more! Now let the dying wretch alone.

In the Academy of Design.

I saw her in the corridor—
  Her form was beauty's own;
She tripped up lightly from the door,
And stood, a splendid dream, before
  A portraiture by Stone.

She looked around with tranquil air;
  A muff before her stood;
He seemed, beside her beauty rare,
A study for a *genre* there,
  By Thomas W. Wood.

She seemed to care for him no whit,
  As at her face he peered;
No doubt she only thought him fit
For application of the wit
  Of dear, facetious Beard.

He matched so ill her grace divine,
  I wished he might be shot
By one of those extremely fine
And stately soldiers, the design
  Of Mr. Julian Scott.

Her hair was auburn; fold on fold
  It fell in wavy flow;
And as its glory downward rolled,
It shone with shining gleams of gold,
  Like sunset by Gignoux.

Her lissome grace you could perceive,
  For all her rich array;
I'm sure she rivaled Powers' Eve,
And was as sweet as Genevieve
  By Henry Peters Gray.

But oh, the splendor of her eyes!
  Deep as the deepest sea!
As radiant as the stars that rise,
As fathomless as summer skies
  By Jervis M'Entee!

She shone the brightest jewel there,
  Among those gems of art;
With manners gay and debonair,
More brightly, softly, sweetly fair
  Than autumn scene by Hart.

Methinks upon that lily hand
  I fain would place a ring;
With her before the altar stand,
And hear, with joy, the accents bland
  Of Dr. S. A. Tyng.

Tatting To-Day.

With figure demure, and a downcast face,
And a tranquil air of quiet grace,
Her delicate fingers deftly wrought
A pattern as fine as a fairy's thought,
Tatting that day!

O maiden fair, with the silken hair,
And the shining eyes of a lustre rare,
What abracadabra's mysterious spell
Is thy flying shuttle weaving so well,
Tatting to-day?

Ah, sir, I work to have my way
In the perfumed air of a gracious day;
My nimble fingers are weaving a snare
To entangle human hearts. Beware
Of my tatting to-day!

So the lily fingers entrancing flew,
And the lustrous eyes were heavenly blue;
And the silken hair was shot with gold,
And down in a golden glory rolled,
Tatting that day.

And she had her will on a gracious day,
All clad in a cloud of white array;
And I bless the day and the perfumed air
That kissed her cheek as she wove her snare
Tatting that day.

SONNETS

FROM THE AFGHANESE.

To a Cow.

Why, cow, how canst thou be so satisfied,
So well content with all things here below,
So unobtrusive and so sleepy-eyed,
So meek, so logy, and so awful slow?
Dost thou not know that everything is mixed—
That naught is as it should be on this earth,
That grievously the world needs to be fixed,
That nothing we can gain has any worth,
That times are hard, that life is full of care,
Of sin and trouble and untowardness,
That love is folly, friendship but a snare?
Prtt! cow, this is no time for laziness!
The cud thou chewest is not what it seems!
Get up and moo! Tear round, and quit thy dreams!

To a Mule

I envy thee, thou self-complacent mule,
For various reasons nowise singular;
But chiefly, though, because thou art a fool,
Which I am not—worse luck! I wish I were—
Thou hast no haunting, fierce, ambitious thoughts,
Nought to conceal, no yearning to be fine,
No greed of gain, no care for aught but oats,
No vain regrets about those ears of thine,
No notes to pay, no debts to guarantee,
No wish to be a poet, and no fear
That other mules will get the best of thee,
In short, thou art serene through all the year.
    Since only such are happy in their lot,
    To be an ass would suit me to a dot.

To a Soft-Shell Clam.

O clam! that sittest silent and serene
Beside the margin of the mighty sea,
Whose grief or madness has no power to wean
Thy spirit from its old tranquillity;
Or who, reposing underneath the sand,
Dost greet the dreamer, gazing far away,
Who over thee unconsciously doth stand,
By squirting in a most peculiar way.
I love thee, clam, thou dweller by the sea!
Thy rich secretions savor of its wealth;
For succulent thou art to a degree,
And noways prejudicial to the health.
    To daily feed on thee would be my wish.
    Go to! Thou art the monarch of all fish.

To a Soft Dollar.

BY A DISREPUTABLE PARTY.

Thou dirty rag, bad-smelling, soiled and torn,
Thou puttest on more frills than seemeth just;
The pictures on thy face are dim and worn,
And thou art worthy only of disgust.
Away! I would have gold for currency!
Bright, gleaming, splendid, rare, barbaric gold!
And shining silver is the change for me,
As in the halcyon specie days of old.
But stay! I'll not destroy thee yet, methinks,
For gold I have not, but I have thee, sure;
And thou, though soiled, art good for numerous drinks,
And other wants that steadfastly endure.
  Therefore I will not scorn to spend thee straight;
  Though thou hast been much vilified of late.

CÆSAR BORGIA TO THE DEVIL.

Hail, comrade! Thou and I should friendly be—
Nay, keep thy throne and sceptre! But 'tis well
That hell, through all its dusky courts, for me
Should make rejoicing. Let the nations tell
How I did serve thee; how I did uphold
Thy kingdom and thy glory and thy name
Upon the earth, with daring deeds and bold
(Not once unworthy, cousin, of thy fame)—
Deeds strange and monstrous, crimes unnamable,
Murders and orgies that did shame the day.
Delirium and delight to me befell,
And all their dizzy depths I sounded. Yea!
    If hell can furnish forth a new sensation,
    I shall be well contented with damnation!

To a Mosquito.

Sad minstrel of the drowsy summer night,
Tune up for songs of more ecstatic tone;
For I will tell thee how thou mayest light
Upon such joy as man hath never known:
Go where my love in white-robed beauty sleeps—
Yon open casement to her chamber wins—
There lies she dreaming, while the wan night weeps
In murmurous sorrow for its ancient sins;
Go hover o'er her; come and tell me, then,
How sweet she is, my dainty, snow-white dove;
Fair, innocent, remote from wicked men;
Warm, tender, soft, and flushed with dreams of love.
I would I had thy wings to traverse air,
I love her so, I would not harm her there.

To Lovely Woman.

Sweet solace of life's weary walks and ways,
Dear heart's delight, for man's befoolment sent,
My lips are fain to advertise thy praise,
Refulgent, fair, and eke polyloquent!
But yet thou art uncertain; fickle winds
Are easier in their airy paths to trace;
For who would put his finger on thee, finds
Thou art not there, nor yet in other place.
Enchanting art thou, full of strange deceit,
Wondrous bewildering, changing at a breath—
Fond, loving, tender, passionate and sweet,
And, at the last, devoted to the death.
What love I bear thee, woman, in this heart!
Come, let me kiss thee, whosoe'er thou art!

To John Brougham.

Prince of good fellows!—this is hackneyed praise!
Thou hast been called so by a million men
Whom thou hast comforted in weary days,
And cheered to laughter often and again.
Care is so constant and so close a foe,
That whoso has the skill to exorcise
His demon face, and drive him down below,
Deserveth praises pealing to the skies.
What shall I say to voice the large delight
A generation owes thee for to-day?
Would that my pen could flash auroral light!
But, as it is, I can but feebly say,
    Wert thou a woman, John, I scarce could be
    More eager for a loving smile from thee.

AN UNDESIRABLE INVENTION.

If, in the future, it shall come to pass,
Some marvelous invention shall be wrought,
Whereby the souls of men, as through a glass,
May be discerned, with every secret thought,
Behold the awful sequence! Love, aware
Of faithlessness, shall turn to bitter hate;
Hope, faith and trust shall darken to despair,
And friendship, made ashamed, shall curse its mate;
Virtue will die, for all will doubt its life;
Wives be no longer chaste, nor maidens pure;
Society rush headlong into strife,
Laws fail, and crime and sacrilege endure,
And murder stalk, with dripping hand,
Unpunished through the supine land.

To Amos G. Torrey.

Dear friend, of old you bade me write, you know;
You promised showers of gold and wreaths of fame;
You periled your immortal soul, also,
By the invention of the ghastly name
Of Peleg Arkwright—pseudonym uncouth.
You praised my rhymes till my hair stood on end.
I did your bidding, and I wrote, forsooth—
But where the gold, and where the fame, my friend?
For all these visions, misty, vague and grand,
Behold the lame result! This little book
Fares forth with timid steps, and, hat in hand,
Beseecheth in Fame's temple but a nook
Where it may hide from stormy winds that blow
Upon the summits that the critics know.